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Suicide Watch

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Suicide Watch // Micah Farmer

He always liked to light the matches.
To feel the flare as the flame took over.
The fear when it crept too close
to fragile fingers and the last minute twist
for extinguished safety. Fact:
there's only so much friction
a lively hand can handle
before the hand is scorched. Even nursery
pastel walls lose their vibrancy
when the babies toddle out. The sound
that crayons make when they scar
the pages always warped his wrist
and he'd rub it to soothe the ache.

We come from bunk beds.
We come from sweaty summer fans
oscillating the putrid air in swirls
of primary reds and yellows.
We fail to see the gradual shift
from summer greens to autumn decay.
We fail to see the chromatic chickadee
contemplating God, but we whistle along
in the startling quiet like a prayer.
Where did these notes come from
and when did they scribble verdicts?
Because the Lord knows, we don't know
the words for this world and the world
pretends to give a speech, pretends martyrdom
when it points a finger upward in contempt.
He can't stay static so we stuff
his face with pills, hoping he'll *just pay attention*
and regurgitate the lecture we just critiqued.
Everybody's afraid of the book, afraid to turn
the pages, because they're afraid
they might get an answer.